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PatentREMARKS

Claims 15-20 have been canceled. New Claim 21 has been added. Claims 1, 7, 8, 11, and 14 have been amended to merely define the invention with more clarity. Applicant submits that all amendments are supported by the application-as-filed and that no new matter has been added. Claims 1-14 and 21 are now in the application.

By amendment herein, Claims 1-7 have been made dependent from Claim 8, and the last paragraph of original Claim 1 has been set forth separately in new Claim 21.

According to the telephone restriction, the examiner has required the following groupings.

Group I - Claims 1-7 Personal care article;

Group II - Claims 8-14 Personal care article;

Group III - Claims 15-18 Method of assembling a pant-like personal care article

Group IV - Claims 19-20 Method of using a pant-like personal care article.

The examiner further required an election between the species of FIGURES 1-3 and FIGURES 4-5.

Applicant hereby elects, with traverse, the claims of Group II, and elects the species of FIGURES 1-3. Considering the amendments set forth herein, applicant submits that Claims 1-6, 8-13 and 21 read on the selected Group and the elected species.

Applicant submits that all claims as presented herein are allowable over all references of record. Allowance is respectfully solicited. No fee is believed to be due. Should any fee be properly due, or if any refund is due, kindly charge same, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account 23-2130.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments or concerns, at the telephone number listed at the end of this document.

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September 13, 2002
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PatentAPPENDIX AVERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADEIn the Specification

Page 9 please replace the paragraph which begins at line 9 and extends to line 13 as follows.

--Referring to FIGURE 1, front portion 20, which will be aligned around a portion of the front torso of a wearer's body in use, as suggested in FIGURES 3 and 4, includes [an] front end 26, [an] second end 27, [a] first side edge 23, [a] second side edge 25, and [a] fastener-receptive area 56. A first lateral section 28 and a second lateral section 29 are connected to front portion 20 via various means described herein.--

Page 9 please replace the paragraph which begins at line 14 and extends to line 18 as follows.

--First lateral section 28 includes an inner portion 36A having an inner edge 39A, and an outer portion 37A having an outer edge 38A. Inner portion 36A of first lateral section 28 comprises a fastener 31A affixed at or near inner edge 39A wherein at least a portion of fastener [flap] 31A overlaps inner edge 39A to provide a cooperative engagement relationship with fastener-receptive area 56.--

Page 9 please replace the paragraph which begins at line 19 and extends to line 23 as follows.

--Similarly, second lateral section 29 includes an inner portion 36B having an inner edge 39B, and an outer portion 37B having an outer edge 38B. Inner portion 36B of second lateral section 29 also comprises a fastener 31B affixed at or near inner edge 39B wherein at least a portion of fastener [flap] 31B overlaps inner edge 39B to provide a cooperative engagement relationship with fastener-receptive area 56.--

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Page 9 please replace the paragraph which begins at line 28 and extends to line 33 as follows.

--As to each lateral section, the respective fasteners are preferably, but not necessarily, aligned, with respect to each other, generally parallel to the X-axis. In some embodiments, fasteners 31A and 31B are incorporated as adjunct elements of the lateral sections, and can be arranged in an abutting relationship to one another (FIGURE 4) and the [second] edges [26A] of the first and second lateral sections, adjacent front portion end 26 are aligned with each other adjacent outer front portion end 26.--

Page 12 please replace the paragraph which begins at line 9 and extends to line 14 as follows.

--Fracturing the front portion is defined as tearing a substantial distance into the front portion, e.g. from the outer cover side, such as to expose the body-side liner and/or the absorbent core, underlying [underlying] the outer cover. Such fracturing can cause so much damage to the personal care article that the article may then be no longer suitable for use, and may be disposed of without being employed in its intended use on a wearer's body.--

Page 12 please replace the paragraph which begins at line 24 and extends to line 26 as follows.

--Such line of weakness can comprise, for example, a line of breakable perforations or cuts. [Lines of weakness are designed and constructed to be readily broken, but only if and when desired by a user, care-giver, or manufacturer.]--

Page 13 please replace the paragraph which begins at line 20 and extends to line 31 as follows.

--Elasticity can be imparted to first and second lateral sections 28 and 29 by employing a resiliently extensible material. Such resiliently

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extensible material can comprise multiple elastics 52, as shown in FIGURES 1 and 3. Such elastic 52 can vary in size, length, and shape. Elongated elastic ribbons, elastic strips, elastic bands, elastic tape having round, flat or other cross-sectional configuration can also be used. Such ribbons, strips, bands, strands, or elastic tape can correspond with [a] relatively small (e.g. less than 10 percent) fractions [fraction] of the areas of the lateral sections, up to and including 100 percent of the fractions [fraction] of the areas of the lateral sections. The greater the fraction of the area covered by the elastic, the greater the opportunity for employing a relatively smaller number of elastic elements. To the extent a contiguous area is to be covered, the elastic can comprise a single element, covering up to 100 percent of the area of the respective lateral sections.--

Page 14 please replace the paragraph which begins at line 14 and extends to line 18 as follows.

--As an alternative to a web or webs containing elastic, one or both of the first and second lateral sections[,] can comprise stretch-bonded laminate and/or neck-bonded laminate, both being resiliently stretchable materials void of elastics. Stretch-bonded laminate and neck-bonded laminate are manufactured by Kimberly-Clark Corporation, Neenah, Wisconsin.--

Page 15 please replace the paragraph which begins at line 12 and extends to line 17 as follows.

--The refastenable structure enables the user to release, adjust, and subsequently re-fasten the personal care article onto the body of the wearer. For example, if personal care article 10 is too tight, first and/or second lateral sections 28 and 29 can be released from front portion 20, repositioned for a looser fit, and then refastened [refasten] at front portion 20 to maintain the looser fit of the personal care article about the body of the wearer.--

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Page 15 please replace the paragraph which begins at line 18 and extends to line 22 as follows.

--In FIGURES 3 and 4, elastics have been illustratively omitted from lateral sections 28 [27] and 29 to clarify locations of article components, e.g. attachment sites 46. Although elastics are not specifically illustrated in lateral sections 28 [27] and 29 of FIGURES 3 and 4, such lateral sections are to be understood to comprise any herein described [describe] material or composite for constructing lateral sections 28 [27] and 29.--

In the Claims

Please cancel Claims 15-20 without prejudice and with right of re-entry into this application or any other appropriate application.

Kindly amend Claims 1, 7, 8, 11, and 14 as follows.

1(Amended). A personal care article as in Claim 8, [comprising:

- (a) a front portion having a front end, a second end, a first side edge, and a second side edge;
- (b) first lateral section and second lateral section, each of the first and second lateral sections having an inner portion releasably fastened to said front portion, and an outer portion attached to said front portion;
- (c) a back portion having a back end, a third side edge, and a fourth side edge; and
- (d) a crotch portion between said front portion and said back portion,]

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each of said outer portions of said first and second lateral sections being secured to one of said third and fourth side edges of said back portion to form a pant-like article having a waist opening, and first and second leg openings[,

strength of attachment of said outer portions of said first and second lateral sections to said front portion being less than strength of the securement of said outer portions of said first and second lateral sections to said back portion, whereby attachment of said outer portions of said first and second lateral sections to said front portion can be separated from said front portion without separating the securement of said first and second lateral sections from the third and fourth side edges of said back portion].

7(Amended). A personal care article as in Claim 6 wherein the inner edges are joined together at a [by] line of weakness.

8(Amended). A personal care article, comprising:

- (a) a front portion having a front end, a second end, a first side edge, and a second side edge;
- (b) a first lateral section and a second lateral section, each of the first and second lateral sections having an inner portion releasably fastened to said front portion, and an outer portion attached at one or more attachment sites to said front portion;
- (c) a back portion having a back end, a third side edge and a fourth side edge; and
- (d) a crotch portion between said front portion and said back portion;

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each of said outer portions of said first and second lateral sections being positioned on said front portion for [direct] securement to one of said third and fourth side edges of said back portion to form a pant-like article having a waist opening, and first and second leg openings,

strength of attachment, at said attachment site, of said outer portions of said first and second lateral sections to said front portion being sufficiently weak that such attachments can be separated from said front portion without substantially fracturing said front portion.

11(Amended). A personal care article as in Claim 8 wherein the attachment at the attachment sites between the outer portions of the lateral sections and the front portion comprises employment of at least one of adhesive bonds, ultrasonic bonds, hook and loop fastening, snaps, buttons, tapes, needle punching, piercing, and thermally activated bonding.

14(Amended). A personal care article as in Claim 13 wherein said inner edges are joined together at a [by] line of weakness.

Please add the following new Claim 21.

21(New). A personal care article as in Claim 1, strength of attachment of said inner portions of said first and second lateral sections to said front portion being less than strength of the securement of said outer portions of said first and second lateral sections to said back portion, whereby attachment of said inner portions of said first and second lateral sections to said front portion can be separated from said front portion without separating the securement of said first and second lateral sections from the third and fourth side edges of said back portion.